

# Recruit Company Mentor Guide

## Coast Guard Training Center Cape May

### **Introduction**

Thank you for volunteering to mentor a recruit company. We hope that you will find this to be a very rewarding experience. Your assistance in guiding them and serving as a positive role model is certainly going to help shape our enlisted workforce of the future. This guide was designed to answer some of the more common questions.

There is one Lead Company Commander (LCC) and one or two Assistant Company Commanders (ACCs) guiding each company. They will already have been notified that you are the Company Mentor. Every company has a mentor so they are well versed in your role and are looking forward to talking with you.

The CCs are experts at what they do and you are encouraged to ask them questions, too, about their jobs, responsibilities and techniques. We hope that you'll find them to be as professional, sharp, and articulate as we do.

You may become as involved as you like as the Company Mentor. If you would like to arrive a day early, or spend more time the day of your visit, there are opportunities to shadow your company or possibly have lunch with you company. We can also arrange a tour of the TRACEN should you desire it.

Recruits arrive at Cape May every Tuesday evening (and graduate every Friday morning), 49 weeks per year. Arriving groups of recruits are organized into companies of approximately 55-75 recruits that are designated with a letter and a number i.e. A177, then B177, etc...until Z177. The next arriving company will then be designated A178, then B178, etc. The recruit training program is eight weeks long. You may have Reservists and Prior Service recruits in addition to the regular Active Duty recruits in your company.

When large groups of recruits arrive in any given week, they are sometimes split into two distinct companies and, if that happens, you may be assigned to two companies. You'll still have the same number of visits, though, and the recruits will all be together for your talks. The major difference for you is that there will be more recruits and twice as many CCs to coordinate with.

The Training Center Battalion Officer will notify you of the scheduled dates for your visits and the LCC(s) will contact you in advance to confirm your visit dates and times.

### **First Visit**

Your first visit will be scheduled for Training Day 11 (TD-11), which is the Saturday at the end of the second week of training. This day is firm due to the tight-fit of the Recruit Training Schedule. You can expect the recruits to still be a bit confused and tired but extremely motivated and respectful.

Wear Tropical Blue Long or Service Dress Blue for your visits, depending on the season. Remember that Cape May gets quite cold and windy in the winter. Although the Command Staff and Training Division Staff usually wear Tropical Blue Long and SDBs, the Recruits usually wear the ODU uniform year round, except at graduation ceremonies.

You should plan and arrange for your own travel and lodging arrangements. The Angel of the Sea Bed & Breakfast and The Grand Hotel both offer per diem rates if you tell them that you are in the

Coast Guard. Remember that Cape May is a resort town and books solid in the summer, so make your reservations early.

The Battalion Officer can provide other lodging recommendations if you would like, or you can visit [www.capemay.com](http://www.capemay.com) for information on other hotels in the area. There is also a VIP Room in the Permanent Party UPH that is sometimes available. We also have Temp Quarters available on a case-by-case basis. You can check the availability via the Training Center Chief Master-At-Arms at (609)898-6224.

All of your talks will be held in a classroom or small auditorium for the larger groups. The CCs will not attend – it'll be just you and the recruits for one hour. What you choose to talk about is your decision but your CCs can provide recommendations if you'd like. More important than the topics you will cover is your appearance, demeanor, and mannerisms. They will notice everything that you do and say – what a great time for you to make a positive impression on the future of the Coast Guard!

After your first visit, you can communicate with the CCs as much as you would like via email. Your visits are important to the training and the CCs will usually “build you up” to the recruits as they look forward to your next visit.

## **Second Visit**

The second visit is scheduled for the Saturday at the end of Training Week 5 (TW-5). The recruits will have received their orders by then and will have completed many other milestones that will probably form the basis of their questions to you. Make sure to confirm the date and time of your visit with the CCs as changes to the Recruit Training Schedule happen frequently.

Since your last visit, it is not uncommon for some recruits to have been discharged or sent back to another company. Likewise, there may be a few recruits who just joined the company and may not have been present for your first visit.

Again, the content of your discussions will be a private matter between you and the recruits. They will likely be much more comfortable during this visit and usually more talkative. Ask the CCs for an update on their performance and progress before you begin so that you can be in concert with the CCs.

At this point in their training, things have changed considerably. Recruits with irresolvable performance or discipline issues have departed the company and the remaining recruits should be focused and somewhat anxious about their first units.

## **Graduation**

The third mentor visit will coincide with graduation, which is almost always on Friday of TW-8. The schedule can be quite different, however, around the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays so you should confirm early if you'll be coming in November or December.

Based on season, uniform for graduation is SDB Bravo or Tropical Blue Long with Combination Cap so confirm with the CCs. As before, your appearance means a lot so try to look your best.

If there is an opportunity, the CCs may invite you to visit with the recruits for a few minutes in the morning but the primary purpose of the third visit is to participate in the graduation ceremony. The recruits will be very busy preparing for the graduation ceremony that morning. The Commanding Officer requests you to pay a courtesy call at the front office between 0900-1000 (Contact Mrs. June Lapp at (609)898-6901).

The recruits have a Company Social (usually a pizza party) on the evening before graduation beginning at 1630 at the Harborview Club. They relax and sometimes perform skits about other

recruits or the Company Commanders during this time. You are invited to attend; contact the Lead Company Commander for details on this event.

There is a briefing for the parents in the auditorium at 1000 that you should plan to attend and the graduation ceremony begins at 1100. During the summer months, you should plan to arrive at the reviewing stand near the parade field at 1050. During the winter, the official party musters in the passageway outside the gymnasium at the same time.

The Public Affairs Officer/Battalion Officer will give you a short briefing about the ceremony before it begins. Basically, you should follow the Training Center Commanding Officer throughout the ceremony. Remember your customs and courtesies: when walking or standing shoulder-to-shoulder with a senior, the senior is always on the right. Key events are the entrance, presentation of awards, your speech, and the presentation of graduation certificates.

Although Senior Officers and VIPs sometimes attend graduations, the mentor is typically the guest speaker. Your speech should be very short: 5 minutes or less. Mentors typically address the quality of the recruits, appropriate comments about the mentor experience, and wish the graduates success in the Coast Guard.

Mentor speeches typically begin with an opening line such as, "Captain <name, CO>, Commander <name, XO>, Commander <name, Training Officer>, distinguished guests, Coast Guard friends and families, and the men and women of recruit company <your company's name>."

After graduation, you will have an opportunity to say good-bye to the CCs as the recruits meet with their parents but the graduation ceremony is the last commitment that you have.

Thank you for your contributions to this important training program. We ask for your assistance in spreading the word about the Company Mentor Program and also in helping us to identify sharp enlisted personnel, E-5 through E-7, who would make good Company Commanders.

### **After Graduation**

We encourage you to continue to mentor your company following graduation. Their first unit, be it "A" School, an active duty or reserve unit, is a very formative period where the new apprentices should have ample opportunities to reinforce what they learned in Recruit Training. The Battalion Officer will provide you a roster of your company and their first units to assist you with keeping in touch.